

# TIM HEALY, SCORNER OF BRITISH DIGNITY, IS NOW THE FIRST HEAD OF THE IRISH FREE STATE

## Has High Hope of Bridging Chasm Between Ulster and Rest of Free State

IN THE little town of Bantry, fringing the Atlantic on the southwestern coast of Ireland, years ago was a poorhouse. It may still be there. And the thankless job of being its guardian belonged to a middle-aged man who had struggled through life as men do and who had married as men will.

Then one day the noble stork flew in through the window and deposited its precious burden upon the shabby crib—just an ordinary-looking baby, to be sure—but you just can't always judge by looks.

The guardian of the poorhouse and his wife talked it over and decided that this young hopeful of theirs should be named Timothy, and so he was christened. His last name was Healy, and it wasn't long before the "ohy" was dropped in favor of just plain "Tim."

And that was the start of Tim Healy, who lived to wag the sharpest tongue in Ireland—who grew out of the obscurity of the poorhouse shadows to the brainiest, most brilliant and witty of the original band of Parnell's Home Rulers, electrifying Ireland from coast to coast and terrifying England with his words.

### Tim Talked His Way Into British Parliament

He was born in 1855 and twenty-seven years later he was a member of Parliament.

Some years ago, when the Irish question was being discussed between two leaders, one asked the other what he thought Tim Healy would be when Ireland became a free State.

"He'll be a mighty old man," was the reply.

On the evening of December 5 King George gave his sanction to the legislation setting up the Irish Free State, and the formal inauguration came the next day with the assembling of Parliament.

And then, lo and behold! Tim Healy, he of the poorhouse of Bantry, was appointed the first Governor General.

The satisfaction was general. Lately he had been associated with the provisional government as friend and adviser, and in recent years his extraordinary legal ability has been at the disposal of the Sinn Feiners.

Following his appointment he went from London to his home in Dublin, and here is what he said:

Tim Healy—and he wants the people to continue to call him that—had a rise to prominence so rapid it would have spoiled most youngsters, but he managed somehow to keep his head on his shoulders and his feet on the floor and fight his way to the top.

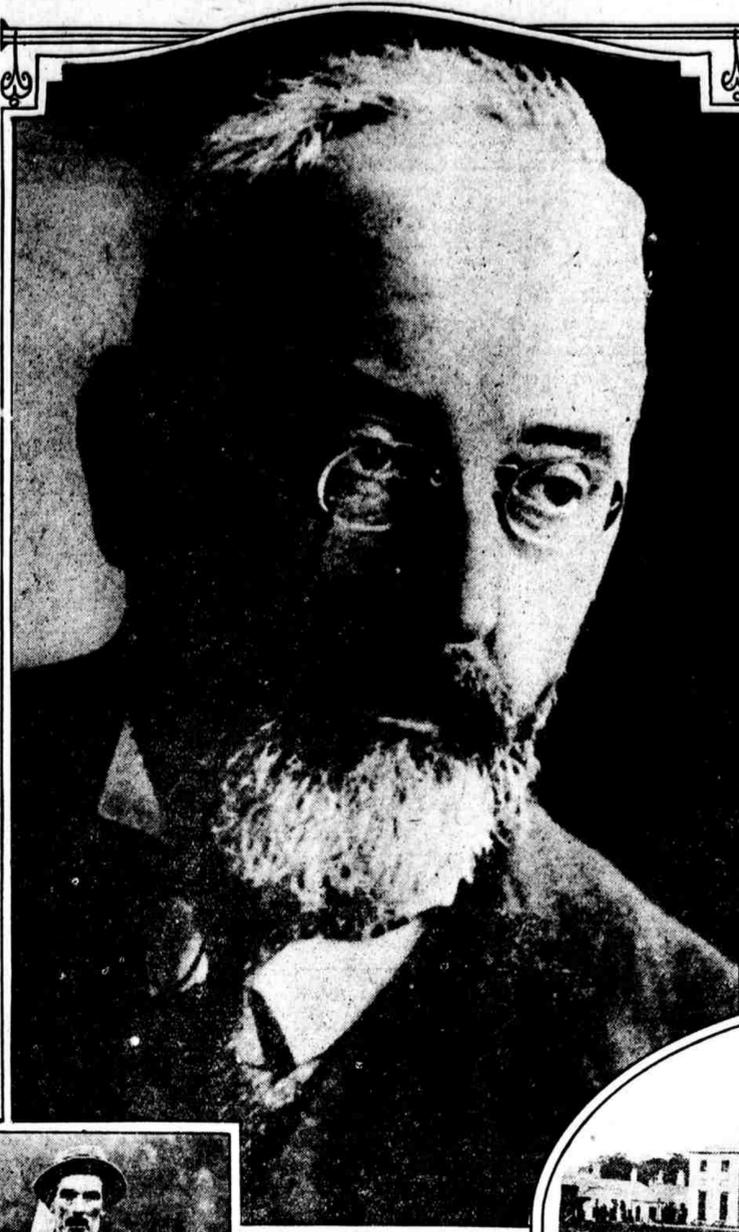
Plenty of misery came into his life in the early days about the poorhouse at Bantry. He saw the suffering folk who came to the doors and asked to be taken in after they had been driven from their homes and their farms by the unbearable burden of rent. He saw the wretched victims of the famine years, and the impressions made upon him were so great that he devoted a lifetime of work for relief from the laws which oppressed. In 1881, after one of the stiffest battles ever seen on the floor of Parliament, he managed to get a clause in the Land Act which saved millions of dollars annually for the Irish farm families in rents.

### His Early Education Was Haphazard Affair

His early education was something left to his own devices. But he learned quickly, and in some strange way he managed to pick up shorthand, an almost unheard-of thing in those days—and then, before he was seventeen years old, he had decided he would leave Ireland and seek his fortune in other parts.

He went to Newcastle, England, and because he could write shorthand he found a job in a railway office. His fondness for literature led him to seek out the places where he could feast his mind upon the best the masters had produced, and two years after he arrived in Newcastle he was secretary of the Literary Club, whose membership was composed of energetic Irish youths anxious to improve their minds. But as a matter of fact, their greatest delight was the deliverance of speeches and papers of ultra-fervent nature against what they solemnly believed was British misrule in Ireland.

At twenty-two the energetic Tim went to London and there he stuck. He had an uncle in Dublin who edited a newspaper which he called the Nation, and the young Tim, now an ex-



Tim Healy, Governor General of Irish Free State, and Vice Regal Lodge, where he will make his home in Dublin



"We are given a measure of freedom as large as that enjoyed by any State in the American Union, indeed, in some respects, larger."

"The blot on our position is separation of the six northeast counties from the rest of Ireland. But I have the highest hopes that, in time, the feelings of north and south may undergo a change. While we cannot expect every-thing at a bound, so many ties link the north and ourselves that we may reasonably expect by mutual concessions, in the course of a few years, that the amalgam may be discovered by which complete reunion takes place."

He paused for a moment, stroked his short white beard and sent a message to America.

### Moral Support Asked of American Public

"I would like to ask the American public," he said, "to give the new Government moral support or, at any rate, not to give its enemies financial support. Forty-one years ago I visited America in the United States seeking Irish and American sympathy in our struggle, going from New York to Galveston and on to San Francisco. The assistance we then received had much to do with planting the Irish branch as freeholders on their soil. Breathing from that Lord Bull-four described as the most odious and impossible land-tenure system that ever cursed agriculture."

"The Free State's opponents have no policy or purpose except wrecking railroads, breaking banks, burning houses, ambushing troops and laying road mines. No American or Irish-American who sends money here to help the Free State should close his eyes to the nature of the campaign he is helping to keep up."

### Used Pen to Help Cause of Ireland

His articles championing the cause of nationalism won him instant recognition and admiration, and at twenty-five the great Parnell, after having observed the work of this youth for three years past, appointed him private secretary, and thereby opened the way for a further successful development, which the energetic Timothy took advantage of in its fullest sense. He had been secretary to Parnell just a year when he became a member of Parliament, a green youngster from Ireland, representing County Wexford, clumsy looking, to say the least, with a shock of black hair that seemed never to stay in place.

But, fearless, he talked back to the leaders. He had a vocabulary that seemed unlimited and a voice with which he could wield it and the nerve and the energy never to retreat, no matter who his opponent or what his relative importance in the problem of the day might be. They guffawed at Tim once. That was the first time he arose to make a speech. But they never did it again.

### When He Wanted to Hit He Hit Hard and Often

He conducted himself along a policy which appeared to have for its motto: "If you see a head, hit it"—and hit it he did. One of his earliest adventures was a leading part in a free-for-all fight on the floor of Parliament.



It was a real fight, too, and when the man in Great Britain, and false teeth clattered the floor. Tim emerged with a bruised cheek. The public meetings usually break up in free-for-all fights and riots, and his has never been disputed that he has had more hair broken than any other man in Great Britain.

### Professional Irreconcilable

"The Island of Irish Politics." He has been hated, and even the English, who he flouted seemed to have a warm spot in their hearts because of his ready wit and absolute fearlessness and sincerity in his own beliefs. As a satirist, one of the most daring and brilliant of the House of Commons has ever known, Tim Healy probably established his greatest claim to be listed with the immortals of English and Irish history.

He proved himself to be one of the greatest obstructionists that ever lived when something came up that he wished to be laid aside, and no Minister in American politics can com-

ing, but actually to start an argument with that most high British divinity.

Seumas MacManus, who knows these Irish persons and what they are doing, in his opening paragraphs in a recent article upon the elevation of Healy to the Governor-Generalship of the new Free State, having in mind that although Healy began his career under the able guidance of Parnell and looked up to him as a hero, even that leader was not of sufficient force to keep the dynamic young Tim in his path, for Healy simply would not follow, had this to say:

"On the day on which Governor-General Tim Healy was first seen riding down O'Connell street I know well,

without having seen it, that the face of Parnell on his statue at the head of that street took on a stouter stare than the sculptor gave it. Dubliners will not be astonished even if they undergo a couple of months of the reign of Tim the First, the upper lip of the

disagreeable to his friends as offensive to his foes. His theory of life was to regard everybody as an enemy till he had proved the contrary, and he affected a brutality of speech that would have made Swift or Habington green with envy. He one time concluded a ha-

## Man Who Bearded Sedate Members of Parliament Comes Out of His Retirement to Rule

all-night sittings of the House of Commons in the early sixties, and even at that early date, Healy led a little bandful of Irish obstructionists which held the fuming, spluttering, furious, and cursing British members in their seats throughout the night, and far into the dim shadows of the early winter morning.

With Joe Biggar, Healy would procure all the Government blue books in which there was a line remotely bearing upon the subject he was supposed to be discussing and with delight in their eyes, these two would hold the squirming speakers and the furious members of the House in their seats while they read the books from cover to cover, not even sparing the foot notes.

"I must say," said the tired speaker once, in an effort to discourage this team, "that I can hardly hear what the honorable member is reading."

"Yes, sir," replied Biggar, not perturbed in the least, "the acoustics of this house certainly leave much to be desired—I'll come nearer to you," and with young Healy he staggered right up under the nose of the speaker, their arms full of blue books.

### Even the Poet Laureate Sang About Timothy

The famous session became subject for the thoughts of the poet laureate of the Irish Parliamentary Party in his song, "The All-Night Sitting."

"Tim Healy has now, and always has had, an abhorrence for titles, and it was upon one of his gay nights on the floor of the House that he shocked the British sense completely into insensibility by referring to an Irish peer as 'his bigoted and malevolent young puppy.'"

And one time he had the ire of Great Britain upon his head because he turned to the British members and addressed them thus: "I had as lief reason with a horde of Zulus as with you set of British asses."

And he cared no more for tradition and sentiment than he did for Englishmen themselves, and he proved it by being the first man in hundreds of years to not only question the Speaker's rul-

status should develop a noticeable curl. One does not need to guess—for it is certain—that the melancholy John Dillon, on reading in his Freeman's Journal of the choosing of Tim to rule over him, drew the shades on his window, nailed them down with tennypenny nails, locked his front door and threw away the key.

### They'll Stay Away Now That Tim Is the Boss

"And 'Wee Joe' Devlin will now never come nearer to Ireland than Belfast—where we can in fancy see him ascend the great brewery chimney stack at the head of Falls road and gaze sorrowfully toward the Promised (but snatched away) Land, where now reigns a King who knows not Joseph if he met him in a desert."

"A few years ago one of those queer relatives of the political morgue John the Melancholy, 'Wee Joe' and the half dozen other little Kaisers who, believing that they owned Ireland body and soul, had already planned to divide the land and the revenue among themselves and their 10,000 aunts and thirty-second cousins—and had with particular satisfaction arranged to install Ireland's black beast, Tim Healy, in a specially constructed steel cage on O'Connell Bridge, to drag out the remainder of his miserable days on a diet of bread and water, supplemented by the peanuts presented to him by passing children—a terrible warning to the world against the flinging of monkey wrenches into political machinery. By a second fantastic turn, the same wheel lifted Tim out of the obscurity into which he had long since retired and elevated him to rule the rule and the revenue among them-

### Gave a Solid Knock to British Dignity

Just about the very first time up. Little Tim shocked the British house by the description of William O'Brien as a very well shoveler.

"A quarter of an hour after he took his seat as a member for Wexford he started up to make his maiden speech—tiny of frame, sardonic of visage, his hands in his breeches pockets, as coolly insolent as a Parisian gambler roaming through the Tuilleries Palace at the heels of Louis Philippe, making

himself a target for the most scathing of the pictures and mirrors, an entirely detestable as a small Diogenes, peering out over the rims of his pince-nez through bilious eyes, over his contemptible audience and horrified the House of Commons with the following exordium: "Mr. Speaker, if the noble Marquis (Harrington) thinks he is going to bully us with his high and mighty Cavalier ways, all I can tell him is he will find himself knocked into a cocked hat in a jiffy, and we will have to put him to the necessity of wiping the blood of all the Cavaliers from his nose in a good many times before he disposes of us."

O'Brien says that at that time Tim was almost as fond of making himself

raucous with these words: "I have nothing more to say to you. I was discharged my stomach." It was only a very few intimates, O'Brien tells us, who at that time knew the man's amazing variety of intellectual resources, his devouring industry, his eloquence of tongue and pen.

In those early days the official organ of the party to which Healy belonged, the United Ireland, was almost entirely the product of the pens of Healy and O'Brien, dashed off at opportune intervals, often in the middle of the night. It was their little office, where both were busily at work one night, that Healy told a visitor: "Here O'Brien and I concoct our United Ireland said. O'Brien supplies the oil and I put in the vinegar."

The tireless and apparently inexhaustible energy of the young Healy cannot be appreciated without realizing that at this time he was not only tending out half the grip for United Ireland, but was reading for the bar, attending to his parliamentary duties and by means and his characteristic fiery speeches every portion of the country was making the Irish landscape entirely unhealthy for all sorts of British officials.

When the boisterous, ranting Orange leader, Colonel Sanderson, replying to a taunt from the Parnellite benches, moved the House to nullo with his famous bull, "I was born an Irishman, and have remained so ever since," Tim Healy stimulated the polite mirth of the House to a roar by answering: "So, despite plenty of circumstantial evidence to the contrary, I presume there is no foundation for the accusation of his enemies that the honorable member transferred his nationality to the nation of Choctaws."

### Caustic Wit Was Felt by Opponents in Debate

Once when an old Tory Die-Hard member, a retired major, having poured a bucketful of bile over the heads of the Irish, flopped back in his seat, unfortunately squashing beyond cure his silk hat. Tim arose to his feet with the honorable member who has just sat down upon the fact that when he sat upon his hat his head didn't happen to be in it.

After Tim had been flying an English Conservative member who was a landlord in Tipperary—flaying him for injustice to his tenants—the snarling and indignant gentleman answered him: "If I am vile a landlord as the honorable member makes me out to be, why did not the honorable member's fellow countrymen, who were never noted for their tender consideration for a landlord's life, shoot me?" "I suppose," retorted Tim, "it is the old story—what was everybody's business, was nobody's business."

Tim Healy permanently established his parliamentary reputation by his brilliancy in the debates upon the Irish land bill of 1881, a brilliancy that forced the admiration of his enemies, including, notably, the great Parnell, who afterward said that Healy was one of the only four men who thoroughly understood that highly complicated measure. By the famous Healy clause, which he had inserted in the bill in committee, a clause which provided that the landlord could not benefit by any of the tenant's improvements, the brilliant young member linked his name with the noted bill through a quarter of a century's succeeding.

It was the occasion of this land bill of 1881 which first showed Healy publicly kicking over the political trave. Tim's most memorable and most daring show of independence was at the notorious Galway election of 1886—where Parnell joined up with the Galwegians Captain O'Shea, husband of his paragon. On that memorable occasion, when none else would take his life in his hands and oppose Parnell, Tim Healy and Joe Bigger, without a moment's hesitation, rushed to Galway and publicly threw off their coats to fight their leader. It was T. P. O'Connell, who, becoming first acquainted with the shocking news of what Parnell was going to do upon Galway, fled from London to Ireland to start the opposition.

Healy and Bigger worked up Galway to a hot pitch and got them to put forward Lynch, a local man, against O'Shea. They blithely told their audience that Mrs. O'Shea was Parnell's mistress—that being the first time the intrigue was made public.

When Parnell arrived in Galway with O'Shea he was greeted by the first frowning, growling crowd he had ever encountered in Ireland. It just forebore attacking Parnell, but had it got its fingers upon O'Shea it would have torn him in shreds. Parnell passed on to his hotel, with the growling crowd dogging his heels, summoned Tim and Joe to his room, showed them that by their opposition they jeopardized the party and jeopardized the great Home Rule Bill then pending, and warned them he would not give up though the people should kick him through the streets of Galway.

### Healy Gave In Finally to Help Irish Cause

Knowing his Parnell, Healy had to resign himself to fate and advise the withdrawal of Lynch. But the stubborn Belfast portman refused his resignation. "All work for Mrs. Lynch," Joe said, "if you're the only body in all Galway to do it."

Parnell, addressing the crowd from the hotel window, said: "You want to smash me? Well, I hold Parliament for you in the lobby of my hand. If you smash me you forever smash your chance of getting that Parliament. This threat, for it was nothing less, stunned the crowd—and eventually made them acquiesce in the scandalous thing. Bigger persisted in his support of Lynch and made him go to the polls—where, of course, he was now defeated by an overwhelming majority. Captain O'Shea, proving himself to be what might be expected, soon after paid Parnell back by selling out to the British politicians.

When the final break came with Parnell, after the O'Shea divorce suit, Healy it was who led the country and smashed his former leader. His superlatively abusive tongue was now used to good purpose. He covered the Parnellites with ridicule, by giving to the country such sublime phrases as: "Parnell has hung to the breeze his standard—the petticoat of Kitty O'Shea."

A good number of years ago this man quitted political life by the back door. Now, suddenly reappearing at the psychological moment, he amid showers of laurels and with blare of bands, is again ushered into political life through the gilded and bejeweled hall door of a palace.



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